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Ceausescu Talks with Zhivkov in Sofia

The talks began yesterday shortly after the high-level Romanian party and government delegation arrived. Principals accompanying Ceausescu on this visit are Premier Maurer and First Deputy Premier Verdet. Other delegation members include Leonte Rautu, a co-chairman of the Romanian-Bulgarian government commission for economic and scientific-technical cooperation, and Ion Avram, Minister of Machine Building.

At first glance, Ceausescu's trip to Sofia appears merely to reciprocate Zhivkov's brief visit to Romania in early August. The visit, however, serves other purposes. The most important of these is to highlight the friendly character of Romanian-Bulgarian relations on the eve of two joint Warsaw Pact exercises slated to be held on both sides of the Bulgarian-Romanian border early next month. In some respects, therefore, the current talks play a role not unlike several articles in bloc media last month which sought to depict the large-scale Pact exercise, "Shield-72," as a "non-threat" to the continued evolution of East-West detente.

Given the composition of the Romanian delegation, agreements calling for expanded economic relations are expected to be the major achievement of the talks. At the national party conference in July, Ceausescu spoke of the need for such enlarged cooperation among Balkan countries, and he even called for "joint production" schemes as part of this cooperation. It is possible that he and Zhivkov will refer to such ventures in their communique. 25X1

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Yugoslav Official Talks of New Purge

The Croatian representative on the party executive bureau, Jure Bilic, has called for a tightening of party unity even if it means an extensive purge. Speaking to a gathering of journalists in Zagreb on 27 September, Bilic warned that whatever steps necessary would be taken--"from the grass roots to the top.....We will expose and get rid of those who do not consistently carry out party programs and policies."

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Bilic also took the opportunity to lash out at corruption and profiteering. He condemned those individuals who, by various underhanded means, turn social property into private property and those who are amassing too much wealth. Basic changes are needed in the self-managing system, and Bilic said now is the time to begin these changes so that individuals can no longer infringe upon the system or their fellow workers.

Bilic's bark may be worse than his bite. Despite the immediacy in the tone of his speech, he indicated that the changes he spoke of were in preparation for the 10th party congress slated for the spring of 1974. Furthermore, the severity of his comments may reflect Bilic's efforts to tailor his remarks to his audience. Croatian journalists were in the forefront of nationalist activity which led to last December's upheaval. Bilic was warning of the party's willingness to again resort to a purge if journalists, party officials, enterprise managers, or anyone else refuse to toe the party line.

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